

642. d. 2
6.

MISCELLANEOUS
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
TRAGEDY
OF

H A M L E T,

Prince of DENMARK.

WITH A
P R E F A C E,

CONTAINING

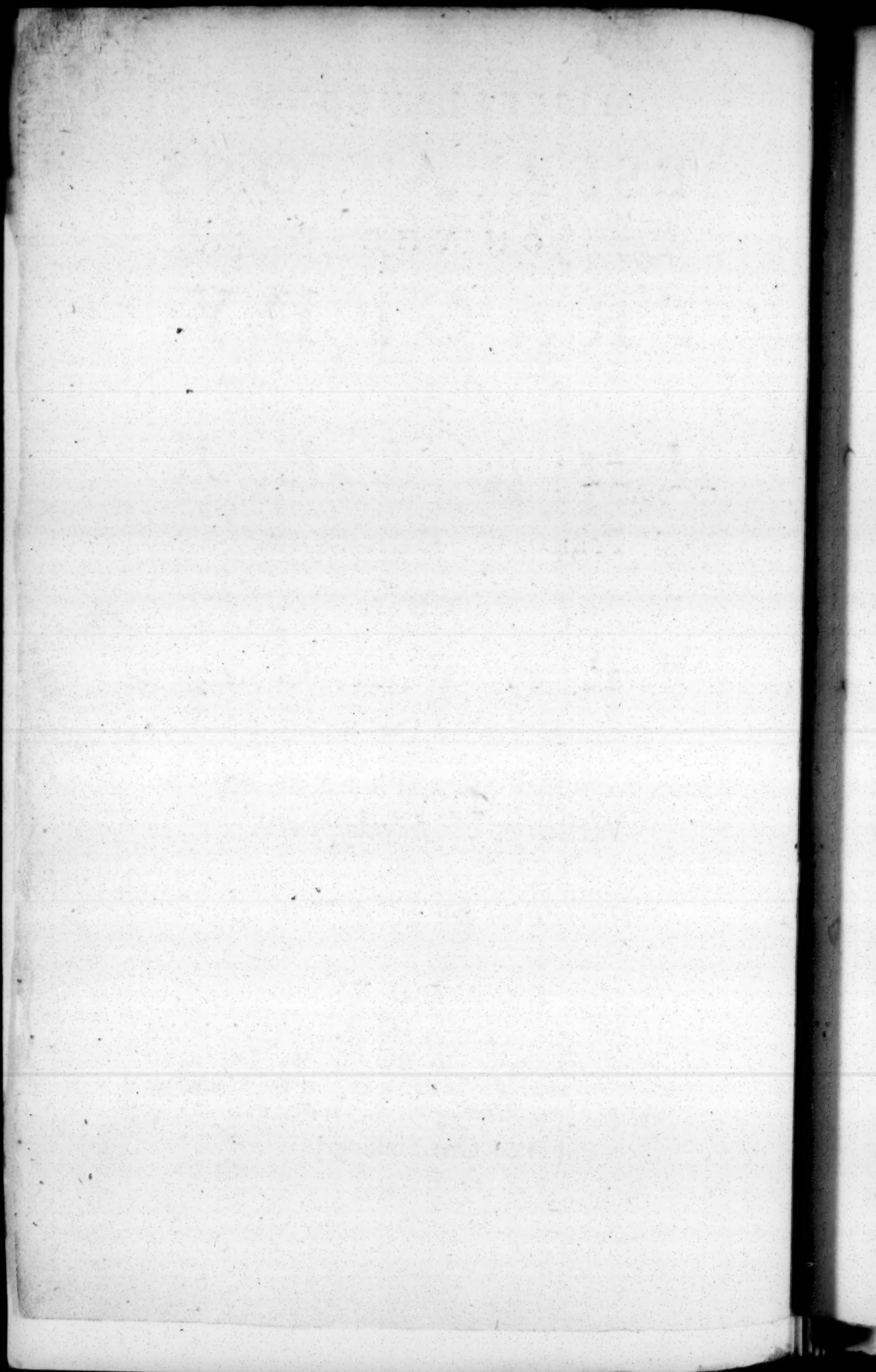
Some General REMARKS on the
Writings of *Shakespeare*.

Μέντις δ' ἄριστος, ὅστις ἐκτάζει καλῶς.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. CLARKE, at *Shakespeare's* Head, behind
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[Price One Shilling.]





P R E F A C E.



SHAKESPEARE who first revived, or more properly form'd the Stage, was the greatest Dramatic Author this Country ever produced, by the Force of a sound Judgment, most lively Imagination, and a perfect Knowledge of human Nature, without the least Assistance from Art, he dispell'd those condense Clouds of Gothic Ignorance, which at that Time obscured us; and first caused *Britain* to appear a formidable Rival to her learned Neighbours. Nothing but a liberal Education was wanting to raise this great Man to the Summit of Perfection, where he would for ever have flourish'd unrivall'd. But the Sun itself has its Spots; nor was any thing as yet ever form'd entirely compleat.

Had he been conversant with the ancient Critics and Tragedians, his Genius, instead of being check'd or depress'd by an Obser-

vance of their Rules, would have soar'd a nobler and sublimer Height. A Critic of Eminence informs us, that "Grand Flights are never in more Danger than when they are left to themselves, without Ballast to poise, or Helm to guide their Course, but encumber'd with their own Weight, and daring without Discretion."

The Unities of Time and Place he for the most part seems very little to regard; in his Observance of the other, he is more regular.

He indeed apologizes for this Absurdity in his Chorus in *Henry* the Vth.

Vouchsafe to those, that have not read the
Story,

That I may prompt them; and of such as
have

I humbly pray them to admit th' Excuse
Of *Time*, of Numbers, and true Course of
Things,

Which cannot in their huge and proper
Life

Be here presented.

This convinces us that he himself was conscious of the Error, but chose rather to proceed in the beaten Path, than be at the Trouble of finding out a new one. But this is directly contrary to the Practice of the Ancients

P R E F A C E.

cients. *Aristotle* has laid it down as a Rule, that the Time supposed to be employ'd in a Tragedy, should be confined to a single Day, or as little more as possible: "Οτι μαλιστα περιεργαται ὑπὸ μίαν περίοδον ἡλίου εἶναι, ἢ μικρόν εξαλλαιττειν. But I cannot see what Harm it can do us, if we suffer ourselves to be deceived, and pass over the length of Time necessary to produce the Incidents represented, and accompany the Poet in his Peregrinations from Place to Place, without being disgusted at the Absurdity, or offended at the Imposition. Tho' *Shakespeare* did not bring Tragedy to the utmost Perfection, yet he laid so noble a Base for its future Rise and Improvement, as exceeded the most sanguine Expectations. Happy would it have been for us, if his Successors could have maintained and supported it with equal Abilities! But alas! they were all unequal to the difficult Task, and sunk under the Weight, their Master supported with Grandeur and Dignity. They are indeed more elaborate and correct, but the Sentiment and Diction can never be equall'd. Our Poet has particularly excell'd in clearly and fully marking and distinguishing the Manners of his principal Characters. Thus we know by his Discourse, that *Macbeth* will break thro' all Laws human and divine to possess the Crown, tho' even at the Expence of his Peace of Mind.

Mind. Nor are we at a Loss to determine whether the god-like *Brutus* will assist his enslaved Country, or tamely submit to the Usurpation of an ambitious Tyrant. How well he has follow'd the Advice of *Horace*, the Reader may easily judge.

*Ætatis cujusque notandi sunt tibi mores,
Mobilibusque decor, maturis dandus & annis.
Reddere qui voces jam scit puer, ac pede
certo*

*Signat humum, gestit paribus colludere, &
iram*

*Colligit ac ponit temere, & mutatur in horas.
Imberbus juvenis, tandem custode remoto,
Gaudet equis canibusque & aprici gramine
campi :*

*Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper,
Utilium tardus provisor, prodigus æris,
Sublimis, cupidusque & amata linquere per-
nix.*

*Conversis studiis, ætas animusque virilis
Quærit opes & amicitias, inservit honori ;
Commisse cavet quod mox mutare laboret.
Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel
quod*

*Quærit & inventis miser abstinet, ac timet
uti ;*

*Vel quod res omnes timide gelideque ministrat,
Dilator, spe lentus, iners, pavidusque futuri ;
Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
Se puero, censor castigatoremque minorum.*

Love

Love, the usual Subject of modern Tragedies, our Poet has very wisely refused Admittance into his best Compositions, it is a Passion truly comic, and when introduced in Tragedy deserves our Contempt and Derision, rather than Pity or Compassion. In *Romeo* and *Juliet* the Distress is real; yet there is none of the modern Gallantry so much admired: But the Play itself can be by no Means reckoned amongst his best Pieces. The following Speech of *Juliet* has been censured as ridiculous, but I believe without just Cause,

Give me my *Romeo*, Night, and when he
dies,

Take him and cut him out in little Stars
And he will make the Face of Heav'n
so fine,

That all the World shall be in Love with
Night

And pay no Worship to the garish Sun.

This evidently alludes to the ancient fabulous Histories, of Mortals, being received into the Heavens, and metamorphosed into Constellations. *Juliet*, by a beautiful Hyperbole, says, that *Romeo's* Body entire, would not only make a Star, but, divided in several Parts, would form so many different splendid Appearances. *Otway*, who next to our Poet commands the Passions,
has

has given us in his *Venice preserv'd*, many nice and judicious Touches of Nature. Notwithstanding all its Faults, it is by far the best of his Performances. The Character of *Jaffier* is a Master-Piece, and the desperate Struggles between Love and Friendship, are admirably and strongly represented. But instead of avoiding the greatest Fault of our Poet, he has taken all imaginable Care to commit the same Crime, he has defiled his Scenes with ridiculous Dialogues between *Antonio* and *Aquilina*, which do not so much as even deserve the Name of Farce. The Ghosts of *Jaffier* and *Pierre* are introduced without any Effect, and instead of raising Terror, only excite Laughter. Though *Shakespeare* has for the most Part caused his Kings and Heroes to maintain their Dignity, without stooping into vulgar Phrase, yet he sometimes makes them descend from their Characters, and use the Language of a Buffoon. Thus *Henry the Vth*, just before the Battle of *Agincourt*.

“ Indeed the *French* may lay twenty *French* Crowns to one they will beat us, for they bear them on their Shoulders; but it is no *English* Treason to cut *French* Crowns, and To-morrow the King himself will be a Clipper,” and immediately after, falls into that beautiful Soliloquy,

Upon

P R E F A C E.

ix

Upon the King ! Let us our Lives, our
Souls,
Our Debts, our careful Wives, our Chil-
dren, and
Our Sins, lay on the King ; he must
bear all.

the Chorus in the same Play, quibbles no-
toriously, speaking of the Conspirators who

Have for the Gilt of *France* (O Guilt in-
deed !)

Confirm'd Conspiracy with fearful *France*.

In other Places he has directly followed
the Advice of the Critic.

*Intererit multum Divusne loquatur, an
beros ;*

*Maturusne senex, an adhuc florente juventâ
Fervidus ; Et matrona potens, an sedula
nutrix ;*

*Mercatorne vagus, cultorne virentis agelli ;
Colchus, an Assyrius ; Thebis nutritus, an
Argis.*

No Person hath been more commended
for an honest Integrity of Heart than our
Poet ; but he is not free from that Court
Vice, Flattery. In his *Macbeth*, he openly
digresses to pay a Compliment to the Prince
then on the Throne ; and whenever he has
occasion to speak of Kings, makes use of
a the

the most religious Terms. But in this he only imitates his Betters; *Horace* and *Virgil* have given the cruel, the bloody *Augustus* a Seat in the Synod of the Gods, and dignified him with the Attributes of the supreme Being. Nor is this Method of Deification, unknown to the Moderns. A late Author in his *Carmen seculare* has not been far behind them, speaking of K. W. 3d.

——— Nothing went before so great,
And nothing greater can succeed.

Tho' this is little less than a Translation of *Horace's*.

——— *Nil ortum tale,
Nec Viget quicquid simile aut secundum.*—

And in another Place,

We Angels Forms, in pious Monarchs
view :

We reverence W.——, for he acts like
you.

meaning like Angels.

Mr. *Rowe* in his *Tamerlane*, a Character designed for the same Monarch, describes him as,

——— Mark'd out
The Scourge of lawless Pride and dire
Ambition,

The great Avenger of the groaning World.
Well

Well has he worn the sacred Cause of
Justice

Upon his prosp'rous Sword, approving
Heav'n

Still crown'd the righteous Warrior with
Success ;

As if he said, *Go forth, and be my Champion,
Thou most like me of all my Works below.*

Who can read these fulsome Extravagancies,
without a secret Contempt of the Author's
Servility? But Flattery is as inseparable from
a Place or Pension, as Satire is from Dis-
mission or Neglect. *Bajazet* when defeated
and taken Prisoner is compar'd to the proud
Arch-Angel,

fall'n from the Height,
Where once, ev'n next to Majesty divine,
Enthron'd he sat, down to the vile Descent
And Lowness of a Slave.——

And in Truth, he seems to have something
of *Milton's* Devil in his Composition. It
cannot be presuming too far, to assert that
the Poet was beholden to *Paradise Lost* for
this Character, and has transplanted the
Temper and Vices of *Satan* into the Breast
of *Bajazet*. I cannot conclude without do-
ing Justice to those *ingenious* Gentlemen,
who have thought proper to alter some of
Shakespeare's Plays.

Mr. *Dryden* and Sir *William Davenant*
judi-

judiciously made Choice of the *Tempest*, the most regular and correct of all our Poet's Works, and the Result was natural: they formed a very bad Play out of a very good one. The Duke of *Buckingham* observing that *Julius Cæsar* was spun out to the Death of *Brutus* and *Cassius*, resolved to divide it into two Plays; and after much Trouble and Pains at length presented us with the most wretched Performances that were ever exhibited on the *English* Stage. *Dursey* and *Cibber* hardly deserve our Notice; but we must not omit one *Tate*, a Writer, devoid of all Spirit and good Taste, not deserving to be rank'd in the meanest Class of the meanest Poetafters, who thinking the Catastrophe of *Lear* too pathetic and moving, cast aside the most beautiful Part, and made us *ample Amends* by inserting his own vile Ribbaldry. Such has been the Fate of all those who have presumed to alter *Shakespeare*, without trying

Quid valeant humeri, quid ferre recusent.

And such will be the Fate of all future Pretenders, unless their Fancy be as pregnant, their Judgment as strong, and their Knowledge as piercing and universal, as the Poet's himself.

OBSER-



OBSERVATIONS
ON
H A M L E T.

N O T E I.

A C T I. S C E N E I.



A S T Night of all,
When yon same Star that's West-
ward from the Pole,
Had made his Course t' illumine that
Part of Heaven
Where now it burns, *Marcellus*
and myself,
The Bell then beating One——

Enter the Ghost.

Peace, break thee off; look where it comes again—

The Poet has shown his Judgment in the Conduct
of this Scene. The Time is Midnight, the Place
B a Plat-

a Platform before the Palace, upon which two Officers make their Appearance, and along with them a Gentleman to whom they had communicated what they had seen two Nights successively, who wanted ocular Demonstration before he would credit the surprising Story. The Centinel is about to give a long circumstantial Narration, when he is unexpectedly interrupted by the Entrance of the Ghost. The Truth of the Observation

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.

is here apparent.

The most artful and spirited Recital could never have raised the Terror that possesses the Spectators at the Appearance of the Phantom, who, from first to last, is grand and majestick, and maintains an equal Character. *Shakespeare* has strictly observed that Rule of *Horace*,

Nec Deus interfit nisi dignus vindice nodus.

He has raised the dead, but it is to reveal a Secret which had never been discovered but by the Intervention and Assistance of a super-natural Power. None of his Plays are destitute of a Moral, this carries a noble one. "Though a Villain may for a Time escape Justice, and enjoy the Fruits of his Wickedness, yet divine Providence will at length overtake him in the Height of his Career, and bring him to condign Punishment."

Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deferuit Poena, pede claudo.

It had been better for his Successors in the Drama,
had

had this Play never been written; for when they observed the universal Applause he received, and indeed very justly deserved, for introducing on the Stage, this inimitable Piece of Machinery, they took Care to croud their Plays with Ghosts, tho' they had no other Effect than to frighten and delight the credulous and ignorant. Thus what in the Hands of an able Master, is noble and sublime; attempted by a Bungler, appears absurd and ridiculous.

The Rev. Mr. *Upton* in his Observations on this Author, has made a slight Mistake in calling *Horatio* a Soldier, who was in Fact a Student at *Wittenberg*, where an University at that Time flourished, along with young *Hamlet*, and came to *Elsinoor* to be a Spectator of the Funeral of his Friend's Father. This is evident from the Prince's first Salutation.

Ham. What makes you from *Wittenberg*, *Horatio*?

Hor. A truant Disposition, good my Lord.

Ham. I know you are no Truant.

But what is your Affair in *Elsinoor*?

Hor. My Lord, I came to see your Father's Funeral.

NOTE II.

IN the most high and palmy State of *Rome*,
 A little e'er the mightiest *Julius* fell,
 The Graves flood tenantless, the sheeted dead
 Did squeak and gibber in the *Roman* Streets;
 Stars shone with Trains of Fire, Dews of Blood
 fell;
 Disasters veil'd the Sun; and the moist Star,
 Upon whose Influence *Neptune's* Empire stands,
 Was sick almost to Dooms-day with Eclipse.

Shakespeare seems to have had before him *Virgil's* Description of the Prodigies preceding the Assassination of *Julius Cæsar*: As it is highly beautiful and poetical, I make no Doubt but the classical Reader will easily pardon me for inserting it.

— Sol extincto miseratus Cæsare Romam,
 Cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine textit,
 Impiaque æternam timuerunt secula noctem.
 Tempore quanquam illo tellus quoque & æquora
 ponti,
 Obscænique canes, importunæque volucres
 Signa dabant. Quoties Cyclopum effervere in agros
 Vidimus undantem ruptis fornacibus Ætnam,
 Flammarumque globos, liquefactaque volvere saxa?
 Armorum sonitum toto Germania cœlo
 Audiit: Insolitis tremuerunt motibus Alpes.
 Vox quoque per Lucos vulgo exaudita silentes
 Ingens, & simulacra modis pallentia miris
 Visa sub obscurum noctis; Pecudesque locutæ
 Infandum! Siftunt Amnes, terræque dehiscunt;
 Et Mæstum illacrymat templis ebur, æraque sudant.
 Proluit infano contorquens vortice sylvas
 Fluviorum

Fluviorum rex Eridanus ; camposque per omnes
 Cum stabulis armenta tulit. Nec tempore eodem
 Tristibus aut extis fibræ apparere minaces,
 Aut puteis manare cruor cessavit ; & alte
 Per noctem resonare, lupis ululantibus, urbes.
 Non alias cœlo ceciderunt plura sereno
 Fulgura ; nec diri toties arserunt cometæ.

GEOR. Lib. I.



NOTE III.

I HAVE heard,
 The Cock that is the Trumpet to the Morn,
 Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding Throat
 Awake the God of Day ; and at his Warning,
 Whether in Sea or Fire, in Earth or Air,
 Th' extravagant and erring Spirit hies
 To his Confine.——

To hold a firm Belief in Apparitions, Witches,
 Demons, &c. was general in the Time of our
 Poet. In that superstitious Age it was universally
 imagined, that Spirits who had Leave to wander
 Abroad during the Night, were obliged to return
 to their Graves at the first Approach of Day.

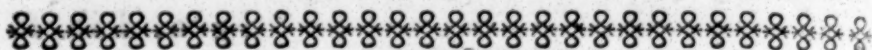
But soft, methinks I scent the Morning Air,
 Brief let me be.——

The Glow-Worm shows the Morning to be near,
 And 'gins to pale her uneffectual Fire,
 Adieu, Adieu, Adieu.——

Virgil

Virgil causes the Shade of *Anchises* to depart with the same Precipitation.

—Vale, torquet medios nox humida curfus,
Et me sævus equis oriens afflavit anhelis.



N O T E IV.

—'G A I N S T that Season comes
Wherein our Saviour's Birth is celebrated;

The Bird of Dawning singeth all Night long:
And then, they say, no Spirit walks abroad;
The Nights are wholesome, then no Planets strike,
No Fairy takes, no Witch hath Power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the Time.

If *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*, it is to be wished that this Age had not excelled the former in Knowledge. Our Ancestors, believed *too much*, We, *too little*. Pity it is, but some Medium had been found between these Extremes, that might have restrained Superstition and Atheism in closer Bounds. The Expression *no Fairy takes* is something obscure, the Meaning is, that their Wiles and Deceits are frustrated on account of the Sacredness of the Time. He cannot be supposed to mean the innocent Part of that diminutive Species, who are reported to pass the Night very harmlessly in dancing round the Rings or Circles, we often see in Pastures; but those unlucky and knavish Sprites, who in the different Shapes of Horses, Hogs, Hounds, Bears, Meteors and various other Appearances,

Appearances, mislead benighted Travellers, and
play a thousand unlucky Pranks.

See the Midsummer Night's Dream.



NOTE V.

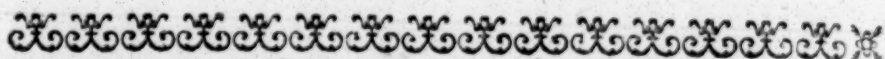
SCENE V.

THE chariest Maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her Beauties to the Moon:
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious Strokes;
The Canker galls the Infants of the Spring,
Too oft before the Buttons are disclos'd;
And in the Morn and liquid Dew of Youth,
Contagious Blastments are most imminent.

This Play every where abounds with just, excellent and moral Precepts, which I cannot too warmly recommend to the serious Perusal and Consideration of every young Lady in *Great-Britain*; who, did they but seriously reflect, that each unguarded Word or Action, however innocent the Intention may be, is liable to be basely misrepresented by the designing Arts of malicious Slanders, would have a greater Regard to their Conduct and Behaviour, than they seem to have at present. Their Universality and Power of this fashionable Vice is well described by *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* in their *Philaster*, or *Love lies a Bleeding*.

O where is Honour safe? Not with the Living;
They feed upon Opinions, Errors, Dreams,
And make them Truths: They draw a Nourishment
Out

Out of Defamings, grow upon Disgraces,
 And when they see a Virtue fortify'd
 Strongly above the Batt'ry of their Tongues,
 Oh, how they cast to sink it, and defeated,
 Soul-sick with Poison, strike the Monuments
 Where noble Names lie sleeping, 'till they Sweat,
 And the cold Marble melt.————



N O T E VI.

SCENE VIII.

I AM thy Father's Spirit.
 Doom'd for a certain Time, to walk the Night,
 And for the Day *confin'd too fast* in Fires,
 'Till the foul Crimes, done in my Days of Nature,
 Are burnt and purg'd away.

So all the Editions read, till the last ingenious
 Editor of *Shakespeare*, observing a Deficiency in
 the Sense, alter'd it to

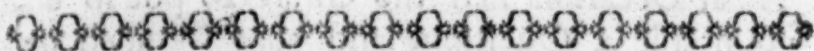
For the Day *confin'd too fast* in Fires.

This is vastly preferable to the common Reading,
 and yet I cannot think it the true one. For the
 Ghost to complain he was *too* closely confin'd,
 seems to carry a Reflection against Providence, as
 if his Punishment was too severe for his Crimes.
 Instead of making any Alteration, let us erase
 this troublesome Particle, which seems to have been
 by some Means foisted into the Text, and read
 the Word *confined* at length, without any Con-
 traction,

traction, and we shall find it answer our Purpose,

For the Day, *confined* fast in Fires.

this is agreeable to the Versification of *Shakespeare*.



N O T E VII.

Nothing is more detrimental to an Author, than a Swarm of injudicious Commentators and Editors, who place his Faults in the strongest and most glaring Light, but refine his Beauties with so liberal a Hand, that at length they become obscure, and almost imperceptible. Some of these Critics will throw away a great deal of their Time, and turn over a Number of obsolete worm-eaten Authors, with no other Intent than to rectify the Orthography of a miserable Pun; whilst whatever really wants an Explanation, is passed by as too inconsiderable to have any Notice taken of it, or supposed to be intelligible to the most incapacitated Reader. I have often wondered how the following Passage could pass through the Hands of Men of Genius and Learning without attracting their Regard, and be handed down to us with the same Inaccuracy it was first printed.

C

I find

I find thee apt ;
 And duller *shouldst* thou be than the fat Weed,
 That roots itself in Ease on *Lethe's* Wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this.

To strike the least Sense out of this extraordinary Speech, we must read it with a Note of Interrogation ; and even then it is scarce passable. What Occasion had the Ghost to put so unaccountable a Question, and that founded on a Supposition, to a Son he found on fire to revenge him ? A Word is indeed transpos'd, which I have re-established in its proper Place, and gained Sense cheaply by a trivial Alteration. It cannot be doubted but *Shakespeare* wrote,

I find thee apt ;
 And duller *wouldst* thou be than the fat Weed,
 That roots itself in Ease on *Lethe's* Wharf,
Shouldst thou not stir in this. —

i. e. *I find thee eager and ready to revenge my Injuries ; but that is no Wonder, thou wouldst be duller than Sloth itself should not the Wrongs I have received incite thee to take the most exemplary Vengeance on my Murthrer.* This is pertinent and natural, and we find the Ghost speak a little more to the Purpose.

NOTE

N O T E VIII.

ACT II. SCENE IV.

IT likes us well,
And at our more consider'd Time we'll read,
Answer and think upon this Business,

The Poet or his Editors are guilty of a Blunder, by causing the King to declare he would give an Answer to an Affair before he had considered it. It is to be supposed *Shakespeare* wrote to this Purpose.

And at our more consider'd Time we'll read,
And think upon, and answer to this Business.

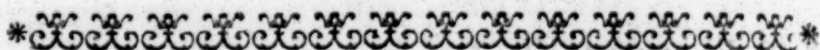


N O T E IX.

AT such a Time I'll loose my Daughter to
him:
Be you and I behind the Arras, then,
Mark the Encounter.

It cannot hurt the Sense, and would it not
read better if we should alter it to

*Let you and I behind the Arras then,
Mark the Encounter.*



NOTE X.

SCENE VI.

“**I**S it not strange; for mine Uncle is King of
Denmark; and those that wou’d make
Mouths at him while my Father liv’d, give twen-
ty, forty, fifty, an hundred Ducats a-piece, for his
Picture in little. There is something in this
more than natural, if Philosophy could find it
out.”

Not in the least. Had *Hamlet* been ac-
quainted with Mankind, he would soon have
found, that nothing is more common, than
to see those very Persons who insult a Man,
when he is in no Condition to revenge him-
self, idolize and worship him, when in a supe-
rior Station.

The great Man down, you mark his Fav’rite
flies;

*The Poor advanc’d, makes Friends of Enemies.
And hitherto doth Love on Fortune tend.—*

NOTE

NOTE XI.

SCENE VII.

THE rugged *Pyrrhus*, he, whose sab
 Arms,
 Black as his Purpose, did the Night resemble,
 When he lay couched in the ominous Horse,
 Hath now his dread and black Complexion
 smear'd
 With Heraldry more dismal ; Head to Foot,
 Now he is total Gules, horridly trickt
 With Blood of Fathers, Mothers, Daughters,
 Sons,
 Baked and impasted with the parching Fires,
 That lend a *tyrannous* and damned Light
 To Murthers vile.

He who can understand what is meant by the
 Fires lending a *tyrannous* Light, is at Liberty
 to adhere to the old Reading. I own it is not
 so plain to me, but it seems to want an Emenda-
 tion. Tho' I would not willingly presume too far,
 and consult what *Shakespeare should have written*,
 rather than what he *did really write*, yet I will
 venture to assert that the following Reading
 would be much more natural than the former.

—— the parching Fires,
 That lend a *treacherous* and damned Light,
 To the vile Murtherer.

i. e. The Streets being in Flames afford a *treacherous* Light.

Treacherous

Treacherous because they betray their Masters, (who might otherwise have probably escaped by the Assistance of the Night) to the destroying *Pyrrhus*. The Speeches so warmly commended by the Poet in the Character of *Hamlet*, have been condemned as full of Bombast. But I never remember to have read a nobler Description of the Silence usually preceding a Hurricane.

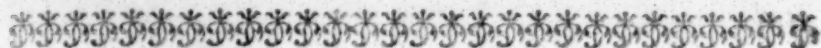
— We often see against some Storm,
A Silence in the Heav'ns, the Rack stand still,
The bold Winds speechless, and the Orb below
As hush as Death.

It is manifest from *Shakespeare's* Description of the Death of *Priam*, that he was not well acquainted with the Classics. Notwithstanding he has deviated from *Virgil's* Account of that Event, yet he has found the Way to make the Catastrophe more moving and poetical.

Pyrrhus finds him,
Striking too short at *Greeks*, his antick Sword
Rebellious to his Arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to Command ; unequal match'd
Pyrrhus at *Priam* drives, in Rage strikes wide,
But with the Whiff and Wind of his fell Sword,
Th' unnerved Father falls. Then senseless *Ilium*
Seeming to feel this Blow, with flaming Top
Stoops to its Base, and with a hideous Crash
Takes Pris'ner *Pyrrhus* Ear: For, lo! his
Sword

Which was declining on the milky Head
Of reverend *Priam*, seem'd i'th' Air to stick ;
So

So like a painted Tyrant *Pyrrhus* stood,
And as a Neutral to his Will and Matter
Did nothing.—



N O T E XII.

SCENE VIII.

THIS is most brave,
That I the Son of the dear murdered,
Must like a Whore, *unpack* my Heart with
Words.

Unpack, metaphorically spoken, and signifies
Ease, unload, disburthen.



N O T E XIII.

ACT III. SCENE I.

WE have closely sent for *Hamlet* hither,
That he, as 'twere by Accident, may
here
Affront Ophelia. Her Father and myself,
Will

Will so bestow ourselves, that seeing, unseen,
We may of their Encounter frankly judge.

Affront in this Place has the same Signification
with confront, meet, face, &c. from *affrontare*,
Ital.

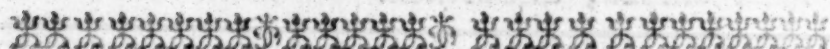
After

——her Father and myself,

The old Folio adds,

lawful Espials

which has been omitted in all the late Editions.
Espial, now obsolete, is the same as *Spie*, and
often used by *Shakespeare* in that Sense.



N O T E XIV.

SCENE II.

TO be, or not to be? that is the Question.—
Whether 'tis nobler in the Mind, to
suffer

The Stings and Arrows of outrageous Fortune;
Or to take Arms against assailing Troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die—to sleep—

No

No more ; and by a Sleep to say we end
 The Heart - Ach, and the thousand natural
 Shocks

That Flesh is Heir to ; 'tis a Consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die—to sleep—
 To sleep? Perchance to dream ; aye, there's
 the Rub——

For in that Sleep of Death what Dreams may
 come,

When we have shuffled off this mortal Coil,
 Must give us Pause———There's the Re-
 spect,

That makes Calamity of so long Life.

For who would bear the Whips and Scorns of
 Time,

Th' Oppressor's Wrong, the proud Man's
 Contumely,

The Pangs of despis'd Love, the Laws Delay,

The Insolence of Office, and the Spurns

That patient Merit of th' unworthy takes ;

When he himself might his *Quietus* make

With a bare Bodkin? Who would Fardles
 bear,

To groan and sweat under a weary Life?

But that the Fear of *something* after Death,

(That undiscover'd Country, from whose
 Bourne

No Traveller returns) puzzles the Will ;

And makes us rather bear those Ills we have,

Than fly to others, that we know not of.

Thus Conscience does make Cowards of us
 all :

And thus the native Hue of Resolution,

Is sicklied o'er with a pale Cast of Thought ;

And Enterprizes of great Pith and Moment,

D

With

With this Regard their Currents turn awry,
And lose the Name of Action.

A Gentleman of whose Judgment I have the
highest Opinion, was pleased to propose an Al-
teration, and for

The Slings and Arrows of outrageous Fortune,

would read

The Stings and Harrows of outrageous Fortune.

Shakespeare uses *the Verb* in another Place in
this Play.

It harrows me with Fear and Wonder.

The Reader is at his Liberty to embrace or re-
ject this Reading, but it carries an Air of Pro-
bability along with it, and rather mends than
injures the Sense. *Hamlet* was so much de-
jected and chagrin'd at the sudden Death of a
Father, whom he affectionately loved, and the
over-hasty incestuous Marriage of his Mother,
that he sincerely wishes for Dissolution.

Oh, that this too, too-solid Flesh would
melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a Dew.

But the Fear of offending the Author of Be-
ing, by acting contrary to the End and Design
of his Being, restrained him from putting an
End to a Life he was willing to lose. His Mind,
even

even before he was ascertained of his Father's violent Death, misgave him *that all was not well*: But when that Master-piece of Villainy was disclosed, the Desire of Death return'd with double Force, and he seriously debates with himself, whether it was better to live or die. It had been represented to him, that Death was the End of Sorrow, Shame and Pain—that, *after Life's fitful Fever we sleep well*—that in the Grave we are at rest for ever—there the Pangs of Love are felt no more—the Captive regains his Liberty—and the Wretch whose Life has been a melancholy Series of Misery and Misfortune, finds a safe Asylum. *Hamlet* wanted only to be convinced of the Truth of this Doctrine, to form his Resolutions. He revolves it in his Mind—is Death, says he, no more than a Sleep, and will no Dreams disturb us—there is the fearful Point. The Dread of what may happen, when we have shaken off this Mask of Flesh, puzzles and confounds us. Our Prospect of Futurity is obscured by Clouds and Darkness impenetrable. Nor can any Visitor return, to give us an Account of that unknown Region. We therefore chuse rather tamely to submit to all the Ills Fate may lay upon us, than fly to others which may be more lasting and severe. Thus a Consciousness of our Crimes, melts and dissolves our firmest Resolutions.

This is not the only Place, this excellent Man, endeavours to convince us of the Folly and Danger of Suicide. In his *Measure for Measure* he paints Death in such glaring Co-

lours, that even the good Man must shudder at the Thoughts of Dissolution.

Aye, but to die, and go we know not whither,
 To lie in cold Obstruction and to rot;
 This sensible warm Motion to become
 A kneaded Clod; and the delighted Spirit
 To bath in fiery Floods, or to reside
 In thrilling Regions of thick ribb'd Ice:
 To be imprison'd in the viewless Winds,
 Or blown with restless Violence about
 This pendant World; or to be worse than worst
 Of those, that lawless and uncertain Thought
 'Imagines howling; 'tis too horrible!
 The weariest and most loathed worldly Life,
 That Pain, Age, Penury and Imprisonment
 Can lay on Nature, is a Paradise
 To what we Fear of Death.—

If the curious Reader will take the Trouble to compare this with *Virgil's* Description of the Tortures of the damn'd, he will find the *Avonian* not at all inferior to the *Mantuan* Bard.—

The witty Earl of *Roscommon* seems to have adopted the Sentiments of our Poet in his Poem entitled, the Prospect of Death.

Meerly to die, no Man of Reason fears:
 For certainly we must
 As we are born, return to Dust:
 Death's the last Point of many ling'ring Years,
 But whither then we go,
 Whither, we fain would know,
 But human Understanding cannot show:
 This

This makes us tremble and creates
 Strange Apprehensions in the Mind,
 Fills it with restless Doubts and wild Debates,
 Concerning what we living cannot find.
 None know what Death is, but the dead :
 Therefore we all, by Nature, dying dread,
 As a strange, doubtful Way, we know not
 how to tread.

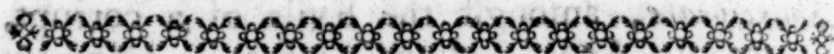
Shakespeare, amongst the Evils of a corrupt,
 degenerate Age, reckons, what he elegantly
 calls

The Insolence of Office.

There is nothing more common, and nothing
 more deserving the severest Censure, than the
 Contempt and Scorn with which Men in Power
 treat their Inferiors. The Love of Sway is
 implanted deep in every Breast, and we take all
 Opportunities of showing our Authority. Our
 Author in another Place levels the whole Ar-
 tillery of his Eloquence against the Abuse of
 Power, and the Haughtiness of her Ministers.

—— could great Men thunder
 As *Jove* himself does, *Jove* would ne'er be
 quiet ;
 For ev'ry *pelting*, *petty* Officer
 Would use his Heaven for Thunder :
 Nothing but Thunder : Merciful Heav'n !
 Thou rather with thy sharp and sulph'rous
 Bolt
 Splitst the unwedgeable and gnarled Oak
 Than

Than the soft Myrtle: Oh, but Man! Proud
 Man
 Dress'd in a little brief Authority,
 Like an angry Ape,
 Plays such fantastick Tricks before high Heav'n,
 As makes the Angels weep. —



N O T E X V.

SCENE IV.

SINCE my dear Soul, was Mistress of her
 Choice,
 And could of Men distinguish, her Election
 Has seal'd thee for herself. For thou hast been
 As one in suffering all, that suffers nothing:
 A Man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
 Has ta'en with equal Thanks, and blest are
 those,
 Whose Blood and Judgment are so well co-
 mingled,
 That they are not a Pipe for Fortune's Finger
 To sound what Stop she please. Give me that
 Man
 That is not Passion's Slave, and I will wear
 him
 In my Heart's Core: Aye in my Heart of
 Heart.

Hamlet

Hamlet is every where described as a Soldier, Scholar, and Philosopher, and he has given the greatest Proof of a consummate Judgment, in his judicious Choice of a Friend and Companion. No servile Flatterer, no base Pandar to his Lust, was permitted to share his Heart, but he selected a Man from the Multitude, who was equally acquainted with the Frowns of Adversity and the Smiles of Prosperity; one, who however capricious Fortune changed the Scene, was still master of himself, and maintained an equal Serenity of Temper. He was what *Horace* calls

———— Sapiens,
 Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores,
 Fortis; & in seipso totus, teres, atque rotundus.

In his faithful Breast, he lodged his dearest Secrets, nor were they ever revealed. He was a Friend in Reality, more than in Name; and when his Prince was expiring, would have attended him to the other World, had he not been prohibited by his express Order and Command. Such are the Effects of a Friendship which has for its Basis, Reason and Virtue.

NOTE

NOTE XVI.

SCENE VI.

TH E Instances that second Marriage
move,
Are base Respects of Thrift, but none of Love.

This Observation, however satyrical and ill-natured it may seem, is nevertheless extremely just. The real and pure Passion of Love dies with the Object on which it first fixes. Altho' second Marriages are allowable by the Laws of Society, yet they mostly are occasioned by a View of Self-Interest, or an Appetite too odious to mention. This was the Opinion of all the Ancients who reckoned second Marriages infamous, as carrying a Suspicion of Incontinency. *Valerius* tells us, Book II. *Olim, quæ uno matrimonio contentæ fuerunt, coronæ pudicitiae honorabantur: multorum matrimoniorum experientiam legitimæ cujusdam intemperantiæ signum credentes.* For this Reason, *Æneas*, when he unexpectedly meets with *Andromache* in *Epirus*, puts this Question to her

Hectoris, Andromache, Pyrrhin' connubia servas?

which

which seems to reflect on her, for submitting to marry *Pyrrhus*, notwithstanding she was his Slave, and entirely under his Command. *Dido*, who knew what belonged to strict Modesty, when she revealed her Love for the *Trojan* Prince, to her affectionate Sister, calls it a *Crime*, altho' her *Sichæus* was no more,

Huic, uni, forsan potui succumbere culpa.

And soon after wishes that Thunder might strike her to the Center if ever she violated the sacred Laws of Modesty by receiving a second Husband in her Bed and Arms.

Sed mihi vel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat
Vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,

Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam,
Ante, pudor, quam te viole, aut tua jura resolvo.

Ille meos, primus qui me sibi junxit, amores
Abstulit: ille habeat secum, servatque sepulcro.

But *Dido* was a Woman, and her firmest Resolves soon melted into Air: Her Flame was too violent to be assuaged by the Dictates of Reason, and she took the Opportunity of a tempestuous Day to conduct the *pious* Hero to a gloomy Cave, and there indulged her Appetites at the Expence of her Modesty.

In several Parts of this Play the Poet seems to level his Satyr against the Fair Sex. Nothing can be produced so severe as

E

Frailty,

Frailty, thy Name is, Woman.

the

——— Varium & mutabile semper
Fæmina,

of *Virgil*, has not half the Poignancy.

concealed under the Character of *Hamlet*, he
lashes the pretty engaging Arts made use of by
the Ladies of his Time, and even yet not out of
Fashion.

“ I have heard of your Painting too, well
enough; God has given you one Face, and you
make yourselves another. You jig, you am-
ble, you lisp and nickname God’s Creatures,
and make your Wantonness your Ignorance.”



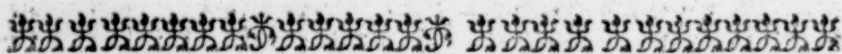
N O T E XVII.

NOR Earth to give me Food, nor Heav’n
Light!
Sport and Repose lock from me Day and Night.
To Desperation turn my Trust and Hope!
An Anchor’s Cheer in Prison be my Scope!
Each

Each opposite that blanks the Face of Joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here and hence, pursue me lasting Strife!
If, once a Widow, ever I be Wife.—

The first of these Lines is ungrammatical, and
should be regulated thus,

Let Earth not give me Food, nor Heav'n
Light.



NOTE XVIII.

SCENE VII.

HAMLET is so intent upon revenging
his Father's Death, that in his counterfeit
Madness, he cannot avoid throwing out Threats
against the King and Queen, which to the By-
standers, who were ignorant of the Fact, were
unintelligible.

Guil. The King, Sir, is marvellous distem-
pered with Choler.

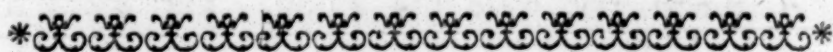
Ham. Your Wisdom would shew itself more
rich to signify this to his Doctor: *For me to
put him to his Purgation, would perhaps plunge
him in more Choler.*

E 2

In

In another Place,

“ I say we'll have no more Marriages, those who are married already, *all but one*, shall live.”



NOTE XIX.

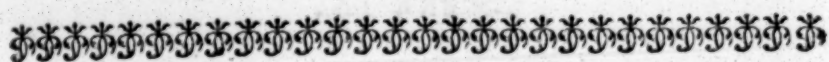
'TIS now the very witching Time of
Night,
When Church-Yards yawn, and Hell itself
breaths out
Contagion to this World.

Shakespeare, according to ancient Superstition, has every where represented Night as unhallowed and prophane : In his *Macbeth* he has described it with the greatest Horror.

— Now o'er one half the Globe
Nature seems dead, and wicked Dreams abuse
The curtain'd Sleep : Now Witchcraft celebrates
Pale *Hecate's* Offerings, and wither'd Murther
(Alarum'd by his Centinel the Wolf,
Whose Howl's his Watch) with his stealthy
Pace,
With *Tarquin* ravishing, slides tow'rd his De-
sign,
Moves like a Ghost.—

It

It was Night when *Canidia* and her infernal Crew performed their diabolical Operations, of which *Priapus* so grievously complains. HOR. Sat. 8. Book I.



NOTE XX.

SCENE VIII.

IN the *corrupted Currents* of this World,
Offence's gilded Hand may shove by Justice.
And oft' 'tis seen the wicked Prize itself,
Buys out the Law.————

This Reading might pass, if no better could be found. I am persuaded *Shakespeare* wrote

In the *corrupt Occurrents* of this World.

i. e. in the Transactions of this corrupted World, Villains by Means of their Wealth evade Justice, and escape with Impunity. He uses Occurrents in this Sense in the last Act.

So tell him with th' *Occurrents* more or less,
Which have solicited.

NOTE

NOTE XXI.

SCENE IX.

— **T**HAT would be scann'd,
 A Villain kills my Father, and for
 that,
 I, his *sole* Son do this same Villain send
 To Heaven. —

So all the Editions read except the last, the Editor of which hath the following Note on this Passage.

I his *sole* Son do this same Villain send

“ The Folio reads *foule Son*, this will lead us to the true Reading, which is, *fal'n Son*, i. e. disinherited. This was an Aggravation of the Injury; that he had not only murder'd the Father, but ruined the Son.” I would not willingly differ from a Gentleman of Mr. W—'s Learning and Judgment, but I cannot see any Want of an Emendation in this Place. The old Reading to me seems the more plausible. *Sole* in this Place is a very emphatical Expression. *Hamlet* means by it, that he was his *only* Son, and consequently ought to be his chief Avenger, instead of doing an Act of Kindness to the Assassin. Moreover *Hamlet* could not be said with any Propriety

Propriety to be *fall'n*. The King had indeed,
as he expressees it,

Popt in between th' Election and his Hopes.

But yet had done him the Justice to appoint him
his Succesor in the Kingdom.

—— let the World take Note,
You are the most immediate to our Throne.
Our chiefeft Courtier, Cousin, and our Son.



N O T E XXII.

SCENE X.

A Bloody Deed ; almost as bad, good Mo-
ther,
As kill a King, and marry with his Brother.

We are not expressely informed whether the
Queen was conscioes of, or concerned in, the
Death of her Husband : But Probability must
pass for Truth, as no Certainty can be obtain'd.
The Ghost, in the Account he gives, says,
that his Brother was the Person who actually
deprived him of his Life.

Upon my secure Hour, thy Uncle stole,
With Juice of cursed Hebenon in a Phial.

It

It seems pretty plain that the Murtherer had obtained the Good-will of the Queen before he perpetrated the Fact.

—— thy Uncle,
That incestuous, that adulterate Beast,
With Witchcraft of his Wits, with traiterous
Gifts,
Won to his shameful Lust,
The Will of my most seeming virtuous Queen.

Had she not been Guilty of Murther as well as Incest, what Occasion had the Ghost to desire his Son to offer her no Violence?

But howsoever, thou pursue this Act,
Taint not thy Mind, nor let thy Soul contrive,
Against thy Mother ought; leave her to Heav'n,
And to those Thorns that in her Bosom lodge
To prick and sting her.—

To corroborate other Circumstances, *Hamlet* in this Scene, directly accuses her with the cruel Action.

—— As bad, good Mother,
As kill a King. ——

Nor does she in the least attempt to prove her Innocence, but confounded with Guilt, desires her Son to be silent on that Head.

O *Hamlet* speak no more,
Thou turn'st mine Eyes into my very Soul,
And

And there I see such black and grained Spots
As will not leave their Tinct.

This Play is said to resemble the *Electra* of *Sophocles*, and it is like it in many Respects. *Gertrude* and *Clytemnestra* are Characters nearly allied. Both were Queens, both Adulteresses, and both of them had their Hands imbrued in the Blood of their Lords and Masters. The latter had some Excuse for the bloody Deed, the former none at all. She was affectionately beloved by a King who had all the Bravery of *Mars*, join'd with the Beauty of *Apollo*, and she rewarded him for his Tendernefs, by ent'ring into a Conspiracy with a cowardly Ruffian, and depriving him of his Life and Crown at the same Time. *Clytemnestra* was no less guilty, but more open; she acknowledged the Fact and gloried in it. Nay, went so far as to declare, that it was Justice that struck him, not her alone.

Ἡ δίκη νιν εἶλε, κ' ἐκ ἐγὼ μόνη.

But her Provocations were great. *Agamemnon* had enticed her Daughter *Iphigenia* to *Aulis*, and there sacrificed her on an Altar, to favour the Cause of the *Argives*. This cruel Treatment incensed her so much, that she vow'd Revenge, and the very Night of his Return from *Troy*, assisted by *Egisthus*, assassinated him in his own Palace. Honest capricious *Ovid*, who is always an Advocate for the fair Sex, excuses this Lady upon another Account with his usual Humour.

F

Dum

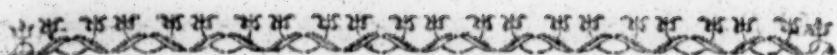
Dum fuit Atrides una contentus, & illa
 Casta fuit ; vitio est improba facta viri.
 Audierat, laurumque manu, vittasque feren-
 tem

Pro nata Chrysen non valuiffe sua.
 Audierat Lyrnesi tuos abducta dolores,
 Bellaque per turpes longius iffe moras.
 Hæc tantum audierat. Priameida viderat
 ipfa.

Victor erat Prædæ Præda pudenda fuæ.
 Inde Thyestiaden animo Thalamoque re-
 cepit,
 Et male peccantem Tyndaris ulta virum
 eft.

De Arte Amandi, Lib. II.

NOTE

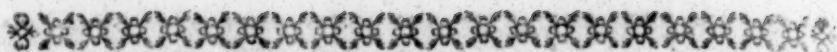


N O T E XXIII.

— **T**HIS *was* your Husband—look you
now what follows.
Here *is* your Husband like a mildew'd *Ear*,
Blasting his wholesome Brother.—

Allusions to Passages in Scripture are very frequent in all the Works of our Author, and his Ideas are often enriched by them. This Similitude has great Beauty, and the Contrast is finely heightened. He hints at *Pharaoh's* Dream, mentioned in the 41st Chapter of *Genesis*.

“ — And he dream'd, and behold seven *Ears* of Corn came up on one Stalk, rank and good—and behold seven thin *Ears*, and *blasted* with the East Wind, sprang up after them—and the seven thin *Ears* devoured the seven rank and full *Ears*.”



N O T E XXIV.

W H Y look you there ! Look how it *steals*
away !
My Father in his Habit as he liv'd !
See where he goes even now out at the Portal.

The Ghost is described

Arm'd at all Points exactly, *Cap-a-pie*.

and for what Reason he *steals* away, I am en-
tirely ignorant. Surely *Shakespeare* wrote,

— look how it *stalks* away.

He uses the same Word twice before in this Play,
describing the Gait of the Apparition.

Look how it *stalks* away.
Thus twice before, and just at this dead Hour,
With martial *Stalk* he has gone by our Watch.

N O T E



N O T E XXV.

ACT IV. SCENE IX.

—Y O U R Sum of Parts,
Did not together pluck such Envy
from him,
As did that one, and that in my Regard
Of the unworthiest *Siege*.

i.e. He did not so much envy all your good Qualities put together, as that one; and that which he regards so much, has the lowest Place in my Esteem. Siege, Fr. signifies Seat, and is used literally in that Sense by Spencer.

Drawing to him the Eyes of all around,
From lofty *Siege* began, these Words aloud
to sound.

Fairy Queen, Book II. Cant. II. St. 39

N O T E



N O T E XXVI.

A C T V. SCENE I.

Enter two Grave-diggers.

IS she to be buried in Christian Burial, that wilfully seeks her own Salvation?

Though this Scene is full of Humour, and had not been amiss in low Comedy, it has not the least Business here. To debase his sublime Compositions, with wretched Farce, commonplace Jokes, and unmeaning Quibbles, seems to have been the Delight of the laurelled, the immortal *Shakespeare*. Some of his foolish bigotted Admirers, have endeavoured to excuse him, by saying, that it was more the Fault of the Age than his, that the Taste of the People was to the highest Degree vitious, when he wrote, that they had been used to Buffoonery, and would not be pleased without it, and that he was obliged to comply with the prevailing Taste for his own Emolument. This instead of excusing, aggravates his Crime. He was conscious

scious he acted wrong, but meanly chose to sacrifice his Sense and Judgment to delight an injudicious Audience, and gain the Applause of a Herd of Fools, rather than approach too near to Purity and Perfection. To mix Comedy with Tragedy is breaking through the sacred Laws of Nature, nor can it be defended. The Ancients universally agreed in their Definition of Tragedy, that it was the Imitation of one *grave*, entire Action. Indeed the Adventures incident to human Life, often, as they follow each other, form a motley Scene: But it is the Business of the Poet to select the grave from the ludicrous, and the grand from the mean. It certainly must be a great Honour to a Man, who had an absolute Command over the Passions, to profane his noble, moral Scenes, with trifling, vain and impertinent Witticisms; who, when he had caused all Hearts to melt, and all Eyes to swim, at the well-painted Representation of human Woe, could tear away the honest Impression for the Sake of a miserable Jest. A modern Author speaks very justly of him when he says.

Pride of his own, and wonder of this Age,
Who first created, and yet rules the Stage,
Bold to design, all powerful to express,
Shakespeare each Passion drew in ev'ry Dress:
Great above Rule, and imitating none,
Rich without borrowing, Nature was his
own.

Yet is his Sense debas'd by gross Allay;
As Gold in Mines lies mix'd with Dirt and
Clay.

Now,

Now, Eagle-wing'd his Heav'n-ward Flight
he takes,

The big Stage thunders, and the Soul
awakes:

Now, low on Earth, a kindred Reptile
creeps,

Sad *Hamlet* quibbles, and the Hearer sleeps.

Essay on verbal Criticism.

This incoherent Absurdity will for ever remain an indelible Blot in the Character of our Poet; and warn us no more to expect Perfection in the Work of a Mortal, than Sincerity in the Breast of a Female.



NOTE



NOTE XXVII.

SCENE III.

AS Peace should still her wheaten Garland
wear,
And stand a *Comma*, 'tween their *Amities*.

This obscure Passage the Rev. Mr. *W*—
has endeavoured to restore. His Note is worth
reading.

“Peace is here (says he) properly and finely
personalized as the Goddess of good League
and Friendship; and very classically dressed
out.” *Ovid* says,

Pax Cererem nutrit, pacis alumna Ceres.

And *Tibullus*,

At nobis, pax alma! veni, spicamque teneto.

But the placing her as a *Comma* or Stop, be-
tween the *Amities* of two Kingdoms, makes her
rather stand like a Cypher. The Poet without
doubt wrote,

G

And

And stand a *Commere* 'tween their Amities.

The Term is taken from a Trafficker in Love, who brings People together, a Procureſs: And this Idea is well appropriated to the ſatirical Turn which the Speaker gives to this wicked Adjuration of the King, who would lay the Foundation of the Peace of the two Kingdoms, in the Blood of the Heir of one of them." Sir *Thomas Hanmer*, who often alters the Context, without giving any Reason for his ſo doing, is pleaſed to read,

And ſtand a *Cement*, 'tween their Amities.

He does not pretend to juſtify this Reading, and indeed it is out of his Power. The Poet has repreſented Peace as a Goddeſs that hinders Strife, the Critic as a Piece of Mortar. The Truth of the Matter is this, Sir *Thomas* had given over the Paſſage as deſperate, and imagined ſome critical Experiments might be very ſafely tried upon it. I ſhall propoſe another Reading, which ſeems to me to be the true one,

As Peace ſhould ſtill her wheaten Garland
wear,

And ſtand a *Comma*, 'tween their *Enmities*.

This is making Peace perform her proper Office; hinder two Nations from deſtroying each other, by ſtanding as a Bar between them. This Word being ill-written or blotted, the
Printer

Printer might very easily mistake *Enm* for *Am*, and thereby cause the Confusion.

I cannot conclude without observing that Sir *Thomas Hanmer* has anticipated me in Note 8. Act II. Scene IV, and reads

It likes us well,
And at our more consider'd Time we'll read,
And think upon an Answer to this Business.

Both the Emendations are to the same Effect, and which is best it is left to the Reader to determine, who will be so candid, if he finds I have accidentally made use of the Observations or Alterations of foregoing Critics, to believe, that the same Thoughts occurred to us both, and that it was not done designedly or on Purpose.

The E N D.



It is a right very easily mischievous line for the
and thereby cause the Commission.
I cannot conclude without observing that
the Commission has anticipated me in Note 8
and in the IV, and terms

as well as us well
at our most candid I think we'll read,
and think upon us as to this business.

It is a right very easily mischievous line for the
and thereby cause the Commission.
I cannot conclude without observing that
the Commission has anticipated me in Note 8
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THE END

